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ABSTRACT

This book illustrates the history of language teaching and explores how theory has repeatedly been mistranslated into practice. First, it provides a tradition of language teaching that is communicatively oriented. The works of Guarino Guarini, a 15th century educator, and Ignatius of Loyola, a 16th century educational administrator, are examined as they wrote about the teaching of Latin. A discussion follows of how the tradition these innovators and theorists adhered to was broken by their followers. The writings of Comenius, a 17th century educational innovator who advocated teaching large numbers of children in the same classroom and who introduced illustrations into textbooks, are then examined, followed by a discussion of how his writings were a series of contradictions between his statements on how learning and teaching happen in theory and his recommendations for actual classroom practice. Finally, the book analyzes contemporary writings and exposes further inconsistencies between theory and practice. To conclude, the book suggests that as a discipline, language teaching has an apparent tradition of not conveying theory into practice and argues that this tradition can be broken. (JL)

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